the mover and opposer of the Bill have to make a brief statement. I am afraid that by referring to details in the provisions of the Bill the principle of the Standing Order is not adhered to.

President : According to the statement of the Lord Chancellor, brevity will vary according to exigencies of cases.

Mr. G. Narayana Aiyar : As regards even the Madras Agriculturists' Relief act it was passed only in 1938. Sufficient time has not elapsed to ascertain whether that act has in any way benefitted the people at large. Further the Madras Act has certain specialities. It exempts from the operation persons having a limited income.

President : At this stage I may say that the possibility of amending this bill, the changes and modifications by the Select Committee, all these could be considered later. At the present moment the fundamental principle of the Bill alone has to be considered.

Mr. G. Narayana Aiyar : If permission is granted for leave to introduce the bill, it means that the principle of the Bill is practically admitted. I seriously object to that. Let us see what the principle of the Bill is. It is simply one for the scaling down of debts. If that principle is admitted no objection could be made later on against this principle. In the light of the assurance that it will not be taken or assumed that the principle of the Bill is accepted and that I will not be barred or estopped from objecting to the principle later on I conclude my speech and oppose the motion.

President : The question before the House is whether the House grants leave to introduce the Travancore Agriculturists' Relief Regulation Amendment Bill.

The motion was put and carried,

Leave was granted.

RESOLUTION.

Mr. James Fletcher : Sir, I beg to move the following resolution ;

> "This Council recommends to the Government that a five-year plan be chalked out and necessary funds allotted for the purpose of improving all the irrigation tanks in Travancore."

Sir, agriculture is overwhelmingly the greatest industry of this country. The prosperity of this country depends on the prosperity of those who cultivate the land. (Mr. Balakrishnan Thampi ; *Hear hear*). Those who live by trading or by manufacture or by doing any kind of investment of money have to depend on the prosperity of the agriculturists. And how can the prosperity of the agriculturists be improved except by improving the facilities for agriculture ?

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Mr. Kottoor Kunjukrishna Pillai: May I ask the member whether the prosperity of the agriculturist depends merely on the improvement of tanks ?

Mr. James Fletcher: Not merely on that. There must be willingness to work their industries and they should have necessary facilities for carrying at their work. That facility comes by giving them irrigation tanks. In this country an agriculturist can get water either through rain or from the reservoirs. It is only from these sources he can carry on his cultivation. Therefore, I have submitted that this Council recommends to Government that a five year plan be chalked out and necessary funds allotted for the purpose of improving all the irrigation tanks in Travancore. Sir, the Government was pleased to establish a committee for proposing relief measures in South Travancore. The inadequate supply of water for irrigation has been a standing grievance special to Nanjinad for the last several years. In order to rectify this grievance, the Committee referred to above has been formed and it has been working in South Travancore. The Committee is of opinion that improvement of irrigation tanks should be undertaken immediately. The Committee decided that tanks that remain practically uncared for should be made fit to hold the maximum quantity of water. It is also of opinion that Rs. 10 lakhs should be allotted for this purpose.

President: Does the honourable member realises what he means when he says " all the irrigation tanks " ? How many irrigation tanks are there in Travancore ?

Mr. G. B. E. Truscott: I cannot say definitely how many irrigation tanks there are in Travancore; but there are many thousands. In Trivandrum and Neyyattinkara tanks alone there are 1600 tanks and in addition to that there are about 1200 under the Kodayar Project and another 1200 Manameri tanks in the Nagercoil Division.

President: Does the honourable member insist on a resolution like the improvement of *all the* irrigation tanks in Travancore ? On a rough calculation it will be seen that there are over a crore and a half tanks in Travancore. Will it be possible to improve all these tanks within a period of five years? If the honourable member would delete the words "all the" and ask that a plan be laid down and pursued for the improvement of the tanks, then probably there may not be any objection. The real trouble is with regard to the words "all the."

Mr. James Fletcher: I accept that suggestion. I may submit that a list of irrigation tanks and channels in Travancore has been prepared and published by the Minor Irrigation Committee in 1935. It consists of a very large number of tanks, as stated by

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the President. It may be impossible to improve every one of these tanks within a period of five years. However whatever can be done should be done in improving these tanks so that the ryots may get on prosperously in those areas where paddy cultivation is carried on. I am requesting that this House may recommend for carrying out this resolution to that extent.

President : I take it that the honourable member has consented to delete the words "all the."

Mr. James Fletcher : Yes, Sir.

Mr. Kottur Kunjukrishna Pillai : I second the resolution. I must make it clear that only the spirit underlying the resolution should be taken to be supported and accepted by me when I second the resolution moved by Mr. James Fletcher. It is said that a five-year plan should be formulated for improving tanks so that the agriculturists' lot might be improved in Travancore. I must at the very outset say that the improvement of tanks cannot in any way appreciably affect or improve the lot of agriculturists in various parts of Travancore where the problem is often-times not want of water but of drainage. When you put forward a big phrase as a five-year plan, it should not be confined to the improvement of tanks alone and the people who are suffering from excess of water should not be excluded from the operation of such a beneficent scheme.

President : This is a very restricted five-year plan.

Mr. Kottur Kunjukrishna Pillai: It is restricted to certain localities. I wish to point out that if Government propose to work out the five-year plan involving such a large expenditure they must consider it more comprehensively and bring forward a plan which would affect not merely a portion of the State but they must consider the question of investing substantial amounts for the improvement of agriculturists throughout the State. That is all that I have to point out.

Mr. G. B. E. Truscott : Now that the resolution has been modified, I do not think there will be any objection to the House passing this resolution if it considers it necessary. The honourable member referred to the Minor Irrigation Committee's report. In this report it is stated that approximately an amount of Rs. 35 lakhs would be required to restore all the unrestored irrigation tanks. Since going into the details of the minor irrigation works, we find that this amount is very much under-estimated. There are, as I stated previously, 1600 tanks in Neyyattinkara and Trivandrum taluks alone and if we allow an average of Rs. 1,500 for the repair of each which is a fair average, this will amount to Rs. 25 lakhs. There are of course in addition other irrigation works not classified

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President : The honourable member may point out what he has done for the previous years.

Mr. G. B. E. Truscott : For the last five years we have spent on irrigation nearly Rs. 8 lakhs and the expenditure is increasing yearly. Of this minor irrigation works amount to about Rs. 6 lakhs and for the past 3 years we have spent about Rs. 1½ lakhs a year on restoration works. We have in all carried out about 1000 works of which about a half are tank restoration. There is one thing that must be understood with regard to minor irrigation and that is that the expenditure involves contributions from the ryots by way of cess or part contribution and that the ryots should maintain the works once they are put in order. This they do not always agree to and so our estimates when sanctioned have to be held up for want of contribution from the ryots. We have prepared estimates amounting to about Rs. 25 lakhs. Some have been sanctioned and are in progress and I estimate that we shall spend this year about Rs. 2 lakhs on minor irrigation works which is the amount alloted by Government yearly. Government can accept a 5-year plan; it is only the question of allotment of funds and the willingness of the ryots to make their contribution for minor irrigation works. Major irrigation is on a different footing.

Mr. V. S. Arumughom Pillai : May I know whether for irrigation works within the Kodayar Project area amounts are debited towards the Project account ?

Mr. G. B. E. Truscott : We have had special funds alloted for the last 15 months for works in the Kodayar area and the amount allotted this year has already been expended and I am asking for fresh funds for this and also for investigating the Perinjani scheme.

Mr. V. S. Arumughom Pillai : My question is whether the amount spent are debited to the Kodayar Project or to the Public funds ?

Mr. G. B. E. Truscott : This money is a special grant. This is not debited to the Kodayar Project.

President : The question before the House is that the resolution moved by Mr. James Fletcher that "This Council recommends to the Government that a five-year plan be chalked out and necessary funds allotted for the purpose of improving irrigation tanks in Travancore."

The motion was put and carried.

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